

# The Civilian Leaders of the Confederacy

By John Goode of Virginia.

Sometime Member of the Confederate Congress, of the Virginia Secession Convention, of the Congress of the United States and President of the Virginia Constitutional Convention of 1901-2.

No. 2.

WILLIAM L. YANCEY.

William L. Yancey is celebrated throughout the South and the country at large as the secession orator. Few men ever lived who could so move at will the fierce democracy. His power over an audience was almost like Omnipotence itself. At times when thoroughly aroused, his eloquence was more terrible than any music. His voice was like music to his hearers. Indeed it may be truly said that his voice was music itself. It has been said that it was worth a trip across the continent to hear him pronounce the word "secession".

On one occasion he had an appointment to address the people of New York in behalf of the Breckenridge and Lane ticket. There was great excitement, and the people for a long time refused to hear him because they regarded him as the great apostle of Secession. In the midst of the uproar he stood surveying the audience, getting in a word now and then, until finally the audience became completely subdued and listened to him in his magnificent address.

They were completely subjugated, and when he concluded his remarks they gave him a great ovation. Such was his power over the multitude.

On another occasion he was employed to prosecute a man charged with murder in one of the Alabama courts. His address was so powerful that the jury were completely swept off their feet, and a verdict of conviction was rendered under the sway of his powerful oratory. A motion was made to set aside the verdict and award the prisoner a new trial upon the ground that the jury was so completely magnetized that they did not know what they were doing when they found the verdict. The motion was granted, and the records of that court will show to-day that the prisoner obtained a new trial because the jury were for the time being bereft of their reason.

In this practical and commercial age, the spirit of commercial greed is so largely predominant, and the great object of life seems to be to put money in the purse, it is said that the living voice no longer exerts its power. The newspapers, the magazines, the intelligence to the remotest corners of the globe, but the living voice still exerts a potential influence.

Born a Crusader.

William L. Yancey was born in Warren county, Ga., August 10, 1816. He was educated at the College in Massachusetts, read law at Sparta, and entered a law office at Greenville, S. C., where he remained two years, and in the meantime edited the Greenville Mountaineer. He married Miss Sarah Caroline Earle in 1841. In the year 1845 he removed to Cahaba, Ala., and commenced life as a planter. While there he edited two weekly newspapers. In 1850 he removed again and resumed the practice of law. He was elected to the Alabama Legislature in 1841, and was elected to the State Senate in 1843, but resigned in 1844, and was elected to the House of Representatives in the Twenty-eighth Congress. Being re-elected December 2, 1845, and was re-elected to the Twenty-ninth Congress, and resigned in August, 1846, to resume the practice of his profession. In 1846 he wrote the platform of the Democratic party and led the delegation of the Democratic party in the convention of 1848 and 1856. He was an ardent supporter of the Buchanan and Breckenridge tickets in 1856. In 1860 he was the Democratic elector from the State at large, and was elected to the Union Hall, New York, making an earnest appeal to the people of the North to maintain constitutional government in the States.

At the Charleston Convention he took the leading part in opposition to the secession of the States, and was elected to the State Convention that met at Montgomery, January 7, 1861, and reported the ordinance of secession. He resigned from that body to accept appointment as the leader of the commission sent to Europe to present the cause of the South to the governments of Great Britain and France. His mission proving fruitless, he returned to Alabama, and was elected, with C. C. Calhoun, the Confederate States elector to the Union Hall, New York, making an earnest appeal to the people of the North to maintain constitutional government in the States.

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tor of secession, while Phillips will take his place in history as a great apostle of a higher law than the Constitution.

Squatter Sovereignty.

Mr. Yancey made the fight of his life in opposition to squatter sovereignty. He regarded it as the most insidious of all the wrongs ever made by the majority of the Southern States of the Union. He believed with all the earnestness of his nature that the opinion maintained by some that the people of a territory acquired by the common law, and that the people of the States can in no other event than the framing of a State Constitution preparatory to admission as a State of the Union, lawfully and constitutionally prevent the settlement of any State from removing or settling in such territory with any property, be it slave or other property, as a restriction as indefensible in principle as if such restriction were imposed by Congress.

To this great principle of equal rights in the common territory of the Union Mr. Yancey devoted himself with all of his great power. It was for that principle he fought in season and out of season from the moment when, under his leadership, that principle was announced in the Alabama platform, through all the mutations of party politics to the great struggle of the Charleston Convention of 1860. His faith never faltered, and knew no variableness or shadow of turning. He was as true to that great principle as the needle to the pole.

When he arose to speak the people hung upon his words, and what an eloquence! His voice was rejected by a few votes he left the hall, and the delegates of several other States followed at his heels. When Mr. Douglas finally received the nomination, his friends offered to Mr. Yancey the place of Vice-President, which he declined. He joined the seceders at Baltimore when Breckenridge was nominated on a Southern platform, and devoted himself to a canvass of the Northern States.

Resemblance to Patrick Henry.

In studying the high qualities of Mr. Yancey as an orator, we are forcibly struck by the similarity between himself and Patrick Henry, that forest-born Demosthenes, who kindled by his eloquence the flame of liberty in the hearts of the people, and incited them to revolution. He was a true orator, and his words were as potent as the sword.

What was the secret of that bewitching

ing power? A great orator has said: "When public bodies are to be addressed on momentous occasions, when great interests are at stake, the strongest passion of the human mind is the desire to speak further than is connected with high intellectual and moral endowments. Clearness, force and earnestness are the qualities which produce conviction. True eloquence, indeed, does not consist in speech; it cannot be brought from afar. Labor and learning may tell for it, but they will tell in vain. Words and phrases may be marshaled in every way, but they cannot compel the mind to exist in the man, in the subject, and in the cause."

Affected passion, intense expression, the pomp of declamation, all may aid, after they cannot reach it. It comes, if it comes at all, like the out-breaking of a fountain from the earth, or the bursting forth of volcanic fires with spontaneous, original native force. The graces taught in the schools, the costly ornaments and studied contrivances of speech seldom and disagree when their own lives and the fate of their wives, their children and their country hang on the decision of the hour. Then words have lost their power, rhetoric is vain and all eloquence is rebuked and subdued as in the presence of higher qualities. Then patriotism is eloquent, then self-devotion is eloquent. The clear conception outgunning the deductions of logic, the high earnest spirit firm, the tongue, beaming from the eye, informing every feature and urging the whole man onward, right onward to his object.

This, this is eloquence, or rather, it is something greater and higher than eloquence; it is action, noble, sublime, godlike action.

Like Patrick Henry, Mr. Yancey's chief endowment was his voice, the most perfect voice that ever overcame a hostile audience. He was a true orator, and his words were as potent as the sword. He was a true orator, and his words were as potent as the sword. He was a true orator, and his words were as potent as the sword.

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# The Times Dispatch

GENEALOGICAL COLUMN

married William Murphy November 19, 1790. All the Bowns of Augusta county, Va., Henry, Moses, John and Richard Bown served in the Revolutionary war of 1776, and their descendants fought in later wars. A Richard Bown has been in every generation from the old Welsh original stock, and several of his descendants were in the Revolutionary command of Rangers from Berkeley county.

Several of this distinguished family have been noted Congressmen—Rees (son of the first Rees of 1740), born in Tennessee county, 1809, was in the Forty-third Congress, and Gustavus Bown was also a prominent lawyer. Some of the family moved South, and their descendants are prominent in the more Northern branch from the New England settlement.

An extended history of the Bown family would be most interesting.

QUERIES AND LETTERS.

(No. 1426.)

Tyree.

Dear Sir:—Mr. Joseph Tyree, who was of French descent, lived about a year from Old Church, Va., or twelve miles from Hanover Courthouse. He had several brothers, one of whom was named Patterson, and another was named John. One more of these brothers moved to Tennessee, and another went to Southwest Virginia. Their eldest son, Mr. John Tyree, was a son of an Englishman, who had settled at Oak Grove, Hanover county, Va. Two sons of this John Tyree, namely, John and William, were in the Revolutionary war, and that is the only connection between the Tyrees and Tyrees.

(No. 1427.)

Pamell.

William Pamell (as first named) and his wife, Sarah, were of Spotsylvania county, 1785, and from there moved to Orange county and settled on David Pamell, of King William county. Samuel Pamell and Ann, were also of Spotsylvania. He died there 1792. Some